



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

NEWS RELEASE

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BAUCUS ENCOURAGED BY COLOMBIA'S AGREEMENT ON U.S. BEEF

Senator Views Action as a "Model" for Peru

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.), ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, today praised Colombia's decision to accept the full range of U.S. beef in accordance with international guidelines. In a series of letters, Colombia affirmed that it would accept by October 31 imports of U.S. beef, regardless of age, consistent with the guidelines of the World Animal Health Organization ("OIE").

"Too many countries for too long have blocked U.S. beef imports based on sham science," said Baucus. **"I applaud Colombia's government for doing the right thing and agreeing to accept the full range of Montana and U.S. beef products – boneless, bone-in, and offals – regardless of age. I have worked hard to persuade Colombian officials to take this step."**

Senator Baucus has been at the forefront of efforts to break down non-science based beef bans in Colombia and elsewhere. He pressed this issue repeatedly with Colombian officials, including President Uribe and Colombia's Ambassador to the United States. Baucus was instrumental to Japan's recent decision to reopen its market to U.S. beef imports and continues to press the Korean government to follow sound science and let beef back into its market.

"Colombia's action should serve as a model for our other trading partners in the region, notably Peru," said Baucus. **"Despite Peru's commitment to follow OIE guidelines, Peru continues to ban U.S. beef from cattle more than 30 months old. Peru needs to resolve this issue before Congress can pass the Peru Trade Promotion Agreement and the agreement enters into force."**

On July 27, the Senate Finance Committee adopted an amendment to ensure that the Peru Trade Promotion Agreement does not enter into force until Peru abides by its commitments on beef. Peru and the United States concluded two separate side letters that obligate Peru to accept U.S. beef consistent with OIE standards, which support imports of U.S. beef regardless of the age of the cattle. Despite this commitment, Peru continues to ban beef from cattle over 30 months of age.

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